LETTER

TO A

MEMBER of the HOUSE of COMMONS.

A

SHORT VIEW

OF THE

CHIEF ARGUMENTS

AGAINST THE

CATHOLIC PETITION

NOW BEFORE PARLIAMENT,

AND OF

ANSWERS TO THEM,

IN A

LETTER TO A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

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Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri.

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LETTER

TO A

MEMBER of the HOUSE of COMMONS.

SIR,

I WILL not take up your time, nor trifle with your understanding, by entering at large into the political necessity there is at the present time, of stifling, as much as possible, all civil and religious dissensions amongst the inhabitants of this empire, and particularly amongst those of the sister island. So far back as the year 1778 his Majesty, and the then Parliament of the kingdom in question, solemnly declared, "that it must tend to the prosperity and strength "of his Majesty's dominions, that his subjects "of all denominations should enjoy the benefits "of a free constitution, and, be bound to each "other by mutual ties of interest and affection *." The same principle was the avowed basis of that UNION, on which the present Minister so em-

* 22 Geo. III. c. 24. Irish.

phatically declared, that he rested his reputation with posterity. And even the bitterest enemy to the majority of his countrymen now living has admitted that, when the said Union should be effected, no mischief could arise from removing every subject of their complaint*.

At the time when the Legislature of Ireland stamped its seal on the above quoted wise and liberal sentiments, our empire was strong in the armies and navies of other powerful states, as well as in its own. The balance of Europe subsisted, which Britain, couched on her Ægis nicely trimmed, as she waved her imperial trident. But, now that this balance is broken to pieces and trodden under foot; now that our enemies multiply themselves by millions at a time; now that amongst the few remaining independent powers of Europe, not an ally is to be found, or even subsidized to defend his own cause as well as ours, would it not be infatuation to reject our only resource, that of closing our ranks and uniting in one impenetrable phalanx, by healing our domestic broils; the resource of recruiting our numbers at home, by making every description of subjects as contented and happy as possible? Would it not be madness, in parti-

* "If we were one people with the British nation, the preponde-
" rance of the protestant body in the whole empire would be so great,
" that all rivalships and jealousies between Protestants and Romanists
" would cease for ever, and it would not be necessary for the safety of
" the empire at large to curb Romanists by any exclusive laws what-
" ever." Dr. Duigenan's Letter to Mr. Grattan, p. 57.

cular, to keep that high spirited and gallant people, who already fight half the battles of the empire by sea and land, in a state of irritation and conscious degradation *, merely because they adhere to the religion of their and our ancestors; a religion that, in spite of the still repeated calumnies of its enemies, teaches them to prefer duty and allegiance to fortune, life and the temporal interests of this very religion †?

Yet there are numbers even of educated men and who wear fine clothes so weak, or so blind, and inattentive to the scenes that are passing in the world, so bigotted themselves, or so obsequious to the narrow conceptions of others, so wedded to their own dear interest, or to the dearer passion of domineering and tyrannizing over others; who, in defiance of all the aforesaid considerations, wish the divisions and calamities of Ireland to be eternal. This latter description, (I trust it is not numerous,) is chiefly to be found amongst the natives or inhabitants of that

* See the grievances that are stated, and those others, which, from motives of moderation and delicacy, are barely hinted at in the Catholic Petition. By the legal distinctions that still exist between Protestants and Catholics, the latter are obviously held out to their fellow-subjects, throughout the British empire, as men only half loyal and half honest. In Ireland, though forming the bulk of the inhabitants, they are not only precluded, as an inferior cast, from the chance of ever rising to places of considerable rank or emolument, let their talents or their services to their king and country be as great as possible, but the actual benefits that have been decreed to them by the legislature are witheld and rendered void.

† See the oath that the Catholics actually have taken, and which is repeated in the petition.

same country. These sicken at the sight of Catholic loyalty, and triumph to find or to occasion sedition amongst the majority of their countrymen. They are described by the great Burke as men "who would become Papists in order to "oppress Protestants, if, being Protestants, they "had not the power of oppressing Papists *."

I shall proceed, Sir, in obedience to your orders, to state the most material arguments which any of the above mentioned descriptions of enemies have hitherto brought against the Catholic Petition, now before you, as far as I have been able to collect these either from the press † or private information, together with such answers to them as appear to me sufficient for confuting

* Letter to a Peer of Ireland, p. 29.

† Amongst the ephemeral publications which have been industriously circulated to counteract the Catholic Petition, besides innumerable essays and strictures in newspapers and reviews, are the following pamphlets: *Observations, &c. on the Correspondence of Lords Redesdale and Fingall;—Catholic Emancipation;—Considerations on the late and present State of Ireland, in Answer to R. S. Tighe, Esq.—A Letter to Dr. Troy on the Coronation of Bonaparte by Pius* VII.—The three first mentioned, though bearing the marks of different workmen, yet evidently come out of the same shop, and consist chiefly of the same materials. The last in the list gives proof of a more masterly hand, in point of fabrication, but consists of the same base metal, which is a composition of jealousy and falsehood. They are all very much in the style of those productions of John Wesley and the protestant associators in the year 1780, by which the riots were produced. Happily, however, from the disposition of the public, they are not likely to be attended with any very bad effects here. One reflection strikes me very forcibly in reading them. I am not surprised at any disturbances that may happen in Ireland, whilst there are men who can deliberately avow so much rancour and calumny before a British public, possessing at the same time a certain degree of influence and power in that devoted island.

them. In doing this I shall chiefly consult brevity and perspicuity.

I. It has been alledged that Papists * cannot be good subjects or members of society, particularly under a sovereign of a different religion from themselves.

I grant that all this has been advanced by the writers alluded to in the notes; and it is clear that a great part of their arguments which I shall have occasion to notice, tend equally to prove that our fidelity cannot be more depended upon by a prince of our own communion than by one of another; though this is more frequently and emphatically urged with respect to the latter case than the former. Indeed personages far more respectable than those writers have maintained that Catholics, without renouncing their religion and becoming Latitudinarians, cannot be peaceable subjects under the present government. They accordingly treat "as mockery and "folly" † those loyal and eloquent Discourses and Remonstrances ‡ which the Catholic Prelates

* I make use of this reproachful term in stating the objections of our adversaries, because it is generally adopted by themselves. I must, however, observe that it is not only a deviation from the liberality of Catholics, who always call persons of other communions by the name which themselves adopt, but also a violation of the celebrated injunctions of Queen Elizabeth, which are considered as making part of the constitution of the established church. See Injunc. 50. in Bishop Sparrow's Collection, p. 80.

† Correspondence between Lords R. and F. Letter v.

‡ See collections of them in two parts, at Keating and Co.'s, No. 37, Duke-street, Grosvenor-square.

of Ireland addressed to those of their communion, during the late tempestuous seasons, for the double purpose of reclaiming bad subjects and confirming good ones.

To speak first of the immediate interest of his Majesty and the nation, before I notice those of Catholics; I ask, would it be prudent, would it be patriotic to hold such language as this, though it were demonstratively true? Supposing any prince or state were so unhappily situated, as to have five millions * of subjects destitute of every religious or moral sentiment, mere *Malays* of society, as the Catholics are called †, what end could it answer for them to be constantly reproached, and even told from authority that they are incapable of being good subjects, and for the professions of their teachers to be spurned at with contempt, except to make them desperate and to precipitate them into all the mischief they are capable of practising? The Catholics, however, will be faithful and loyal (no thanks to their enemies) because they are so from principle. Their Prelates and Clergy will continue to enforce these lessons, because it is their duty so to do; and they will look for their recompense to a Master who will reward them according to the uprightness of their hearts and the degree of per-

* Taking the Catholics of Ireland at two millions and a half, the Catholics of Great-Britain, Canada, the West Indies, including Trinidad and Malta, and the eastern empire, will certainly supply as many more. Since writing the above I learn from Mr. Newnham's calculations, that the Catholics of Ireland amount to above 4,300,000 persons.

† Considerations, p. 14.

secution they endure in performing this lesson of their religion. I should not be surprised, however, if they were to be less forward than they have been in publishing to the world their Addresses of loyalty, however avowedly beneficial they have proved *, when they find that even persons of rank and consequence can descend to the meanness of torturing their expressions into meanings foreign to their hearts, and of distilling the poison of sedition from the purest effusions of their patriotism †.

To advert now to the truth of the above stated objections; can we conceive a greater insult than it offers to our christian ancestors during the space of near ten centuries, and to the different Catholic nations at the present day? What; were the founders of our monarchy, constitution and laws, the virtuous Saxons, the magnanimous Normans, no better than collections of perfidious wretches? Was there no faith, no honour, no loyalty in the country, until they were introduced into it by Henry VIII. and his daughter Elizabeth? Or, to speak of our contemporaries; though we are at war with the Spaniards, yet will any generous Englishman say,

* This was expressly stated in the official letter of the Viceroy of Ireland when the French fleet appeared in Bantry Bay, with respect to the Pastoral Letter of Dr. Moylan, of Cork, to his flock.

† This has been the occupation of a swarm of party writers, amongst whom none is more malignant than *The Yeoman* (no mean man, when he puts off his regimentals, and appears in his proper dress) in his strictures on the very loyal *Address* of Dr. Troy.

that perfidy and disloyalty form the character of that nation, devoted as it is supposed to be beyond all others to what is called Popery? Were the French themselves a disloyal people whilst they were Catholics? So far from it, the maxim of the celebrated demagogue Mirabeau, at the beginning of the revolution, is well known: *We must uncatholicize France*, he used to say, *before we can effect our purposes.* Or if the question be concerning catholic subjects under sovereigns or states of a different communion from themselves, I ask; do the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia complain of the disloyalty of their numerous catholic subjects? Was the fidelity of the Catholics in Holland, who formed one third of its whole population, or of those in the protestant states of Germany, ever called in question? In short, to say nothing of ourselves, will even the writers alluded to say that the Canadians have proved themselves bad subjects to the crown of England?

II. But, these writers assign their reasons for what they assert. They, one and all, shew that it is impossible that persons holding the doctrine of exclusive salvation, as Catholics do, and living under a protestant government, should sincerely and effectually perform their duty to it, or be at peace with their fellow subjects. It is precisely on this account that the dignified personage alluded to above has asserted, that, un-

less the Popish Clergy will teach that "Pro-
" testants of every description—are their bre-
" thren in the faith of Christ *," their "preach-
" ing loyalty, especially to the lower orders,
" and to those without property, cannot be *sin-*
" *cere*—and seems to be either *mockery* or *folly*†."

Without going deep into theological matters, it is sufficient to observe that these writers are extremely misinformed on the subject they treat of; and that even the noble controvertist, who has had better means of understanding it than

* According to this authoritative decision, Catholics must become *brethren in faith* with a great many different sects who will not be *brethren in faith* with one another. They must teach, that the *pro* and the *con*, in a prodigious number of questions, is equally "the faith of Christ." To mention two or three instances, most likely to strike the noble controvertist, they must, on one hand, teach as *the faith of Christ*, (with the Quakers, whom he so much commends) that it is sinful to bear arms in defence of the nation, to pay tythes, and to take oaths in a court of justice; and that every extremity is to be endured rather than do any of these things; and, on the other hand, they must teach, conformably to their own doctrine, and that of the establishment, that the *faith of Christ* is directly the contrary of all this.—They must maintain, that it is indifferent to the *faith of Christ*, whether they continue to preach *obedience to the laws of God and the state*, or whether they preach, with the numberless Anomeans of this country, that there is *no law whatever* binding upon the faithful. Finally, they must become fellow-members in faith and church communion with the Moravians, who are charged by Bishop Warburton and Dr. Maclaine with such *infamous tenets and practices* as ought not to be named amongst Christians. See Maclaine's Translation of Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. vol. v. p. 1.

† *Correspondence, &c.* Letter v. The writer of *Observations on the Correspondence*, treating of the same subject, says, "We agree with "Lord R. that all these exhortations are given to the wind." P. 58.

the others, is under an egregious and fatal mistake when he represents Catholics as not admitting any persons to be *Christians* who are not members of their church, and when he so confidently tells Lord F. "Your Lordship will find, "upon enquiry, that the appellation of Heathen "is applied by those to every Protestant*." In opposition to this I maintain, it will be found that a catholic child who was to answer, at catechism, conformably to this assertion, would not be thought sufficiently instructed to receive confirmation. I maintain also, that the Church of Rome asserts nothing else on this point but what the Church of England also asserts in her 39 articles†: to say nothing of the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed, which, however complained of, is still publicly read thirteen times in the year in all the principal churches of the realm, and which forms part of that doctrine to which every minister is obliged to swear his unfeigned assent and consent.

But to speak more directly to the objection. I ask, could the Protestants, during the reigns of Queen Mary and of James II., who so firmly believed that Popery was no other than the reign of Antichrist, be good subjects? Can a Protestant nobleman or gentleman at present, who travels through a catholic country, or makes a

* Ibid. Letter iii.

† Art. 18.

temporary residence in it, sincerely promise to observe fidelity towards it during the time that he is under its protection, notwithstanding he has unfortunately sworn that its religious worship is idolatrous * ? How easily might this objection be turned to the disadvantage of our protestant countrymen at Lisbon or Vienna! In a word, was our Saviour Christ *sincere* in ordering tribute to be paid to Cæsar †; that Cæsar being a Tiberius? Or was it a *mockery* in St. Paul to preach up loyalty to the Romans ‡ during the reign of Nero because he did not, at the same time, open heaven's gates to that monster? I may add, that the innumerable Methodists who cover the land universally hold that every person is in a state of damnation, into whose mind faith, that is conviction of his justification, is not suddenly shot, at some unexpected moment. Yet are the Methodists very good subjects.

III. Another and a more plausible reason assigned by these writers why Catholics cannot be good subjects under a protestant government, is because they can give no test of their fidelity to it. For "it is laid down as a fundamental article "of the Popish Religion, by many general coun-"cils, particularly by the 4th Lateran, A. D. "1215, and that of Constance, A. D. 1414, that "no faith is to be kept with heretics, and that

* Declaration of the 30th of Charles II. c. i.

† Matt. xxii. 21. ‡ Rom. xiii.

"no oath of allegiance can bind any of its sec-
"taries to a protestant* or heretical state†."

For an answer to this vile and exploded calumny, which, at the present day, can gain belief with none but the most stupidly ignorant or the most propensely malicious, I refer to the demonstrative argument contained in the Petition. It is then evidently clear that if Catholics could but lull their consciences asleep for only five minutes, whilst they took certain other oaths to the present government as they have taken the oath of allegiance, or if there were any expedient in their church for so doing by way of indulgence, dispensation, or occasional conformity, they need not trouble themselves with petitions to parliament; their remedy would be in their own hands, and they might laugh at the malice of their enemies. Yet it is equally evident that they do refuse these oaths, by whomsoever tendered, because, on one hand, their consciences can neither digest them, nor, on the other, permit

* If it were worth while pointing out historical or chronological errors in temporary pamphlets, the only objects of which are to mislead and inflame, I might expose the absurdity of representing the councils as condemning professors of the *protestant* religion, in one case *a century*, in the other *three centuries*, before such a description of persons was ever heard of in the world.

† *Observ. on Corresp.* p. 14. "The following doctrines are main-
"tained and enjoined by some general councils as a religious duty to
"all Roman Catholics. To depose and murder heretical sovereigns
"whenever they have it in their power so to do; that an oath of fide-
"lity to an heretical state is null and void, &c." *Considerat. on State of Ireland*, p. 12. See also *Emancip.* p. 30.

them to deceive a protestant government. In one word, the oaths framed by the legislature, in times of irritation and persecution for keeping Catholics out of parliament, offices, &c. have, down to the present day, fully answered their intended purpose. Can the same be said of the religious tests or oaths of office enacted by the legislature with respect to other descriptions of his Majesty's subjects?

IV. Still these writers urge, and their books are chiefly made up of proofs that the violation of faith with heretics is "a fundamental tenet "of the popish religion, as having been laid down by many general councils,*" from the decisions of which, as they prove by many quotations, Papists are not allowed to depart; in short, that "they cannot renounce this and the other "dangerous doctrines connected with it, without "ceasing to be Roman Catholics †."

My answer to this is: Be it as these writers represent the matter, we have then, according to their avowal, renounced the fundamental tenets of the Popish Religion. We are no longer Papists. Of course they may safely dismiss their religious and patriotic apprehensions, and no evil can arise from the legislature's granting our petition. Because these two points, you will be pleased to remember, are indisputably certain; first, that we have unequivocally and publicly

* *Consid.*

† *Cath. Emanc.* p. 37.

renounced and abjured these perfidious and impious tenets in our oath of allegiance, rehearsed in the Petition; and secondly, that the severe sacrifices which we make, by refusing to take some other oaths that are proposed to us by the protestant legislature, render us worthy of credit with respect to those which we actually take. How far, in making this abjuration, we reject the decisions of the council of Constance and the other councils is our own affair, not that of our adversaries, and we are willing to discuss it with them at our leisure †: but thus far the records of the public courts will bear evidence that we

† It is easy to demonstrate that the Council of Constance did not teach but actually condemned, as errors of the Wickliffites and Hussites, the practice of lying for the sake of religion, and rebelling against and punishing magistrates because they are not supposed to be in God's favour. With respect to the burning of John Huss, he neither received any safe conduct from the council, nor was he sentenced to corporal punishment by it. That matter lies between the Emperor Sigismund and the magistrates of the free city of Constance. The former furnished him with a travelling pass, the latter executed him by virtue of the old laws of the empire. Were these writers to persist in cavilling, and in charging us with doctrines which we have abjured, in consequence of the misrepresented or real tenets and conduct of individuals, I should be forced to retort upon them the outrageously seditious doctrine and practices of Calvin and Beza in behalf of their religion at Geneva and in France, and of Knox and Goodman in Scotland. "Neither promise nor oath," says Knox, "can oblige any "man to give assistance to tyrants against God." *Address to the People of Scotland.* A case more in point with respect to the Council of Constance occurred at the General Reformed Synod of Dort, when the 14 Arminian deputies, at the end of the discussions, found themselves seized upon as criminals, and hurried into perpetual exile, without being allowed so much as to see their wives or children. *See Gerard Brand. Hist. Ref. Abridg.* t. ii. p. 171.

have abjured the aforesaid tenets, and the acts of the King and the Parliaments of both islands will testify that they have received and been satisfied with our abjuration of them.

V. But, says one of these writers, "Though the "leading *Lay* Roman Catholics of England and "Ireland did renounce the most objectionable of "these tenets of their faith, yet I do insist," (who insists? some person, who will not even pledge his name for his veracity,) "I do insist "that there never has been any solemn universal "renunciation of these opinious made by the "Roman Catholic Clergy of England or of Ire-"land. They could not renounce them without "ceasing to be Roman Catholics *." He then quotes, at full length, the Encyclical Letter of the three Catholic Bishops, dated Jan. 19, 1791, by way of proof that the heads of the clergy opposed the abjuration of these obnoxious articles on the part of the laity †.

You, dear Sir, remember well the circumstances of that disagreeable contention amongst the Catholics at the aforesaid period, concerning the terms of the oath to be taken by them, which gave occasion to the aforesaid letter, and which, amongst some bad consequences, had one good effect, in more fully satisfying Parliament as to the delicacy of their consciences concerning the nature and obligations of an oath. You know

* *Catholic Emancipation*, p. 37.

† Ibid. p. 38.

there was not the least difference amongst them concerning the lawfulness and duty of abjuring all and every one of the perfidious and disloyal doctrines in question, but only concerning the terms in which certain theological matters, interwoven with the oath, ought to be expressed, the determination of which the Bishops claimed, as belonging to them. All these points were amply discussed in both Houses of Parliament, and were finally settled in the Upper House by that ornament of his station, the truly learned and exemplary Bishop of St. Asaph*, who most certainly did not connive at a traiterous or king-killing doctrine. Now as to the fact itself, upon which this anonymous Gentleman *insists*, I *insist*, on the other hand, that the same public records, which prove the English Lay Catholics in general to have renounced these wicked opinions, in the terms prescribed by Parliament, equally prove the English Catholic Clergy to have done the same. With respect to their Bishops in particular, no sooner was the Act passed than they published their pastoral letters, exhorting the Catholics to take the oath contained in it. I have every reason to believe, that the Catholic Prelates and Clergy of Ireland have as generally taken it. Thus much I am sure of, that the truly respectable Dr. Troy, whose tried loyalty has been so frequently calumniated, has an official certificate of his having done so. To be brief, these uncharita-

* The Right Rev. Dr. Horsley.

ble writers may insist on it as long as they please, that Catholics are bound to hold the doctrines of treachery and rebellion, but I defy them to produce a single Catholic in all his Majesty's dominions who actually holds them, or who is not at all times ready to anathematize them in public.

VI. But it will be said I have been here speaking of the tenets and conduct of English Roman Catholics. Now, "in England they are "not papists, as they are papists in Ireland *. "They (the Irish papists) differ as much in point "of moral principle from all other members of "the Christian Church in the British empire, "as the Malays do from all the other inhabitants "of the east †." Hence "Lord R. entertained "a different opinion of the Catholics of Ireland "from what he *professed* to entertain of the Ca-"tholics of England. As Sir J. M. he had ap-"proved of the tenets, the principles, and con-"duct of the English Catholics; as Lord R. he "condemns the principles, the tenets, and the "conduct of the Irish Catholics. He brands "them in a lump with the severest censures, "&c. ‡." "The rational and laudable conduct "of a numerous body of English Roman Catho-"lics in *condemning and renouncing the tenets of* "*their religion* in 1790, notwithstanding the rigid

* *Letter to Dr. Troy, by Melancthon*, p. 47.

† *Considerations on the State of Ireland*, p. 14.

‡ *Letter to Dr. Troy*, p. 2.

"inhibitions of their clergy, had exalted them "so much in the opinion of their Protestant "fellow subjects, and of Lord R. in particular, "that he moved for, and succeeded in procuring, "a repeal of the severe penal laws against them. "Lord R. was induced to think that Lord F. "and the Irish Roman Catholics of a superior class "were as enlightened and as free from those fatal "errors as their English fellow religionists;— "but Lord R. was mistaken in the idea which he "formed of the higher ranks of the Irish Ro- "man Catholics *."

I answer these anonymous and malignant libellers of a generous and loyal people, that in vain they attempt to sow dissensions amongst persons of the same communion. The English Catholics have no other system of *moral principles* or *religious tenets* than the Irish Catholics have; though a greater proportion of the latter, owing to their forming the bulk of the populace, and to their late immoral penal laws †, may have disgraced these principles and tenets. The English Catholics, though they will not hold religious communion with Anomeans, Moravians, and Ezechielites ‡, yet they cordially and joyfully unite with Irish Catholics in doctrine and

* *Observations on the Correspondence*, p. 2.

† More particularly the gavel laws, by which brothers were tempted to turn traitors to their brothers, and children to their parents.

‡ Whose favourite text is, as it was of the Puritans in the grand rebellion: *To bind their kings in chains: and their nobles in links of iron*, Ps. cxlix.

worship, as "their true brethren in the faith of "Christ." They have contradicted under their hands, and they spurn at the idea that they have *condemned and renounced the tenets of their religion.* On the other hand Lord Fingall, and the higher rank of Irish Catholics, with all the Catholic clergy, equally spurn at the idea of their entertaining, or ever having entertained, or countenanced the perfidious and wicked doctrines imputed to them, and they point to their oath, rehearsed in their present petition, and recorded in the public courts, to prove that they have abjured those doctrines in the same terms that the English lay Catholics have done. I hope this writer may have it in his power to prove that he has always supported as pure a moral character, and exhibited as gallant and disinterested a loyalty as the nobleman has done whom he has thus particularly aspersed *.

* Strange it is, that the greater part of these writers, and of the authors they so largely quote, including the late Chancellor of Ireland, should have been themselves, or have had parents who were these incorrigible traitors and monsters of society; in short, these "Malays of the British empire," until their eyes were at some happy moment opened to all the horrors of their faith and morality, by the effulgent evidence of some emolument or preferment.

What makes all doubtful questions clear?

About $\begin{smallmatrix}2000\\200\end{smallmatrix}$ pounds a year.

It is said that the father of a learned gentleman, who now sees the deepest of all men into the mystery of abomination called Popery, though originally a mere Irish peasant, was possessed of intellects naturally so bright as to have discovered all the wickedness and absurdity of Popery, in which he had been educated, at the rate of 30l. per annum, affixed to the management of a parish school! But however, as the

VII. But these writers cite a great number of facts from general history, and particularly from the histories of England and Ireland, to prove that Popery has in all ages undermined the happiness of mankind, by the plots and insurrections which it has produced. "Wherever Popery has raised "its ominous standard," says one of them, "there "was no peace for man *."

I answer, that to this religion every nation in Europe owes its laws, constitution, arts, sciences, christianity and civilization. What savages were the aboriginal Celts of both islands?—What barbarians were our ancestors, the Saxons, when they invaded this island from Germany, and for a hundred years afterwards, till the monk St. Augustine and his companions instructed and humanized them at the same time that they converted them. But man is an imperfect being, and therefore the history of man, in every situation, will present innumerable instances of depravity, and of the abuse of the best institutions. It is certain, however, that almost every one of the facts referred to by these writers has been misrepresented, and a great part of their quotations misapplied ‡. To confine myself, in a field of

shades of death advanced, his intellectual darkness returned: he died a Papist, as did his mother also, who was originally a dissenter.

* *Letter to Dr. Troy*, p. 54.

‡ An instance of this malicious perversion occurs in these writers, where they apply to Catholics all the evil consequences that Locke has deduced from the tenet of *dominion being founded in grace*: a tenet which the Catholic Church has formally condemned in Wycliff. and the Anabaptists. *Observ. on Corresp.* p. 59. *Considerat.* p. 16.

such extent, to English history, it is certain that the Catholics of this country saw the religion of their ancestors changed with an unexampled patience, and behaved themselves as a body towards Elizabeth, who was sworn to protect it *, with unrivalled fidelity. It has been demonstrated that almost all the plots against her or her successors, with which individuals amongst them are charged, have been either forged or essentially misrepresented †. Even the infernal powder plot, though thirteen Catholics were really implicated in it, was much more of an *anticatholic*

Locke, with all his talents, was a bitter enemy to Catholics, but he had too much candour to charge Catholics with the doctrines they anathematize. The former of these writers not only quotes an old speech of Mr. Pitt for sentiments which he does not *now* entertain, but also falsifies it. *Obs.* p. 7. He even descends to the quotation of scrawlings and chalkings on posts and walls. Ibid. p. 23.

* She insisted upon being crowned by a Catholic Prelate, and she swore to maintain the Church and Prelates as she found them. See Heylin and Collier.

† See *Letters to a Prebendary,* Keating and Co. Faulder, &c. Letter VI. in which the exemplary fidelity of the whole Catholic Body, Clergy and Laity, to their tyrant Elizabeth, is displayed, particularly on the trying occasions of Northumberland's insurrection and of the Spanish armada. The several plots also ascribed to individuals, are examined by ancient documents: Campian, and his 200 fellow sufferers, are proved, on the authority of the Queen's own historiographer Camden, &c. to have died political victims, for the mere profession of their religion. With respect to one pretended plot, which the *Observer* has described at full length, p. 94. it is there demonstrated, from Strype, &c. that there is hardly a word of truth in what he says concerning it. Parry was no Catholic, but an hypocritical ministerial spy, who quarrelling with his employers about his reward, was silenced with a halter. See *Letters to a Prebend.* p. 265. Were I to expose all the calumnies of this writer and his companions, I should be obliged to write a folio.

than of a *catholic* conspiracy *. With respect to what is called Oates's Plot, to say nothing of several others of the same stamp, it is agreed upon by all historians, and even the greatest enemies of the Catholics, that there was no other reality in it, except that streams of catholic blood were poured out in order to support its credit, and that those oaths and declarations were framed by parliament, which it is the object of the present Petition to remove. The real trial of the subject's loyalty and fidelity occurred at the time of the grand rebellion, when, it is well known, that those who were the loudest in their clamours against popish perfidy and disloyalty overthrew the constitution both in church and state, and murdered their sovereign, whilst the Catholics performed their duty with such fidelity, that half the estates confiscated, and one third of the blood of noblemen and gentlemen shed

* See the new lights which are, in the last mentioned work, thrown on that conspiracy. It was formed on the model of a former gunpowder-plot in Scotland, contrived by the greatest men in the nation, by which King Henry Darnley, with all his family, perished. It seems to have been first set on foot by Secretary Sir Robert Cecil, through his agent Tresham; but it was certainly all along managed and directed by him, as his own letters shew, with a view of implicating the head Catholics in it, twenty of whom then sat in the house of peers. In this point he failed, he could only engage thirteen youths of little consideration and of desperate fortunes. But he succeeded in his ultimate designs, namely, in forcing the king to break off his connections with the Catholic party, and in raising a storm of indignation and calumny against their religion, which is not yet appeased at the distance of 200 years.

in their defence, belonged to Roman Catholics *. If this will not satisfy Sir R. M., Dr. D., and Melancthon, so called, and if I am forced unwillingly to make a set-off in order to silence them, I would call upon them to point out a country, in which the standard of the reformation was erected, without being attended with the very effects they ascribe to Popery.

VIII. It cannot, however, be denied, that a most horrible popish rebellion lately existed in Ireland, attended with circumstances of the most infernal barbarity, of which priests were the contrivers and conductors.

It is not denied that a most horrible rebellion did lately happen in Ireland, attended with circumstances of the most dreadful barbarity, both on the part of the rebels themselves and of very many who opposed them. But I deny that this was in any other sense a *popish rebellion*, than the London riots in the year 1780, which brought the kingdom to the brink of ruin, was a *protestant insurrection*. In both cases the insurgents were collected from the mass of the population of the country. In the mean time, says an able writer, " they were combated by catholic militia " regiments, by catholic noblemen, gentlemen, " and farmers, that is, by all who had kept them- " selves aloof, not from the religious, but the

* See their names, &c. in *Lord Castlemain's Catholic Apology*, edit. 3. p. 574.

"political illusion*." These poor deluded wretches, who had been peaceful and loyal at the period when the enemy's fleet commanded the Channel, and at a later period, when another fleet appeared off Bantry Bay, were unhappily, in the year 1798, "provoked, cajoled and seduced by a "knot of Gentlemen-deists, some of Catholic, "but more of Protestant education†." The most powerful device, however, for rousing these ignorant peasants, according to the writers themselves, ‡ (and a most powerful one it must have been) was to persuade them that they were all to be assassinated in the darkness of the night, by their enemies the Orangemen. Accordingly it is a well known fact, that at the time we are speaking of, the peasants in certain districts used to quit their cabins by night, and sleep under hedges, not certainly for the pleasure of enjoying the nightly dews, but, as they supposed, for the security of their lives. What gave a colour to these reports were the unchecked violences which they heard had been practiced some time before on their brethren in the county of Armagh, &c. who were literally hunted out of their houses and province by night, and the cruel oppression which they themselves experienced in so many instances from their aforesaid enemies. It is ad-

* See an *Argument against Extermination, occasioned by Dr. Duigenan's Representation of the State of Ireland*, p. 33.

† Ibid. p. 32.

‡ *Observ.* p. 71.

mitted also that a few catholic priests, perhaps a dozen out of 2500, (in short not more in proportion than there were clergymen altogether of other communions) were implicated in the treasonable proceedings *. But these were, for the most part, men who had been publicly censured by their bishops or were unemployed, on account of their conduct and character. In the mean time these bishops, with the whole body of parish priests, exerted every degree of influence and authority they possesed, to the extremity even of excommunication, and at the hazard of their

* I shall not enter into a discussion of the numerous charges brought against the Irish Catholics for their conduct either in former or the present times; because this has been done by writers, who, from their local information, are better qualified to perform this task than I am, particularly by Henry Brooke, Esq. author of *The Farmer's Letters*, &c. in his little spirited *Trial of the R. Catholics of Ireland*; also by Dr. Curry in his *Historical Memoirs*, and his *History of the Civil Wars of Ireland*, 2 vols. and lastly, by Francis Plowden, Esq. in his *History of Ireland*, 3 vols. quarto, which has been so much abused precisely because it cannot be refuted. I will barely mention here, with respect to former affairs, that the Irish Catholics were in a singular predicament during the reign of Charles I. when there were both English and Scotch rebellions existing, one of the pretexts of which was the king's partiality to the Catholics and the Irish, and that the latter may perhaps be excused for standing on their own defence, especially as they were secretly encouraged so to do, both by the aforesaid Charles I. and afterwards by his son Charles II. With respect to late events, I cannot omit this opportunity of barely making one or two remarks on the depositions of the drummers and soldiers, which are so triumphantly brought forward by the *Observer* in his Appendix, in order to prove that F. Peter O'Neil, who was so inhumanly whipped, and afterwards transported, as having been concerned in the murder of a soldier, was actually guilty of that crime. Now what does the evidence against him, as stated in the depositions, actually amount to? We have first the tes-

property and persons, to extinguish these fatal flames; for which exertions they are now requited

timony of Farmer Thomas O'Neil, who soon afterwards proved himself to be a very bad man, and therefore unworthy of belief; who also is now dead, and of course cannot be cross-examined by the accused or his friends; and finally, who made this declaration against his namesake to save his own life: see No. I. 2dly, We have that of F. Maguire: but he also has been dead these four years, and I know it can be proved, by the oaths of persons fully as credible and as intelligent as the serjeant-major, and the drum-major, that in other circumstances he gave a very different character of F. Peter O'Neil, from that which he is stated to have given at the place of punishment. If he were alive, I make no doubt he would be able to reconcile the apparent contradiction in his testimony, by shewing that what he said against his comrade at the triangle, was in consequence of the strong assurances of his guilt which he received from the respectable personages there present: for we may be satisfied, they would not be wanting in magnifying the proofs of the sufferer's guilt, after they had actually proceeded to the execution of their sentence against him.—In a word, it appears from the said evidence, that "F. Maguire himself seemed greatly agitated on seeing the "Priest tied up, (and who had actually then received fifty lashes) and "asked Lord Loftus, if he had any thing against him (Maguire)?" No. V. Was the latter then in a situation and frame of mind to give an impartial character of F. O'Neil, unless we suppose him to have been really endued with the fortitude of a martyr? Lastly, we are presented with the confession of F. O'Neil himself. But how was this obtained? By the force of tortures. "After being tied up, and receiving about 50 "lashes, Lord Loftus asked him, if he would confess, and the remain-"der of his punishment should be remitted." No. V.—In short, "after "receiving, as he (the deponent) thinks, about 300 lashes at different "periods, he heard him confess to Lord Loftus, that he had signed the "death-warrant of a soldier who had been murdered some time before;—that "he was the real murderer of the man:"—in short, any thing that was put into his mouth to say. Is this a proper evidence of any man's guilt? It may pass for such with an Irish court-martial; but it will not go down with an English court of justice, nor with an English public. I grant, that a Christian is bound to lose his life rather than tell the smallest lie; but will even the *Observer* vouch for it, that the force of lengthened tortures, whilst the flesh is harrowed up, and the blood is streaming from an hundred wounds, would not make him devi-

by a certain party with the grossest calumny and insult *.

IX. Another most fatal principle of Papists is that of persecution. "They are ordered to "extirpate heretics, whenever they are able to "do so; for which they are offered eternal sal-"vation †." The 4th council of Lateran has decreed it, and Dr. Troy and Messrs. Plowden testify that it is not lawful for Papists to recede from the decrees of a general council ‡. "They "cannot do it without ceasing to be Roman "Catholics §."

Then there are no Roman Catholics on either side of St. George's Channel; because it is indisputably certain, that there is not a man, whether of the clergy or the laity, amongst those who have hitherto passed for such, who either has not

ate from the strict truth, especially when the effect of it would only be to criminate himself?—I say nothing of the glaring inconsistency of F. O'Neil's first *authorizing* the murder, and then giving absolution for it as a *crime*; or his absolving thirteen or fifteen men, as it appears, at the same time, and without any sacramental preparation on their part; or of the other absurdities in the deposition, which cannot fail of striking every catholic reader. In one point it is possible F. O'Neal may have been mistaken in his Narrative, where he says that the three last lashes were inflicted on him with a wire cat. He could only speak from his *own* senses of the effect they produced upon him. Possibly, he was deceived by some stander by, who thought he saw wire, &c. in the instrument.

* *Considerations on the State of Ireland*, p. 13.

† Ibid. p. 12.

‡ *Emancip.* p. 42.

§ Ibid. p. 37.

sworn, or is not ready to swear, that he holds himself to be under no such obligation. How happy, for these writers, as I said before! They may henceforward sleep in peace, and leave the legislature to exercise its wisdom and benevolence in uniting all descriptions of subjects in the bonds of interest and affection.

But, to answer the objection more directly, I do not know any other church, except the Catholic, which has *formally declared* that she has no power of inflicting sanguinary punishment in any case whatever*. She carries this spirit so far, as to render those of her clergy who concur indirectly in the shedding of blood, whether in a cause of heresy, or any other cause, incapable of receiving a benefice, or of exercising ecclesiastical functions. It is in virtue of this ancient law that the Bishops of the establishment quit their seats in the Upper House when a capital cause comes before it. Neither does the Church by her general discipline require or solicit temporal princes to put heretics to death. On the contrary, she was bound to recommend them to mercy, where the laws of the state used to inflict sanguinary punishments upon them. It is true, that a general assembly of almost all the sovereigns as well as prelates of Christendom, called the fourth Council of Lateran, having been held for stopping the progress of a most infamous, as well as most impious and destructive sect,

* 3 Lateran, can. 27, &c.

called Albigenses, which began to lay all Europe waste, and threatened to stop the propagation of the human species, *a temporary ordinance of discipline** took place for punishing those feudatory princes, and their protector, Raymund Count of Toulouse in particular, with the loss of their territories, if they continued to do so. But as this ordinance, being of a civil and temporal nature, derived its force from the Emperors, Kings, sovereign Princes and states present in the council, so it never had any force or efficacy, except in those places where it was received by them, and at present it is of no force any where †. Most certainly it never was received in England, nor was any person put to death here on the score of religion, until two hundred years after the Council of Lateran, when in consequence of the murders, rebellions, and other violences committed by Wickliff's disciples, the statute *De Heretico Comburendo* was passed, at which time there was not a word said about the Council of Lateran. With respect to the execrable fires of Queen Mary's reign, they were lighted up by the policy, not the religion of that remorseless Queen. She received many instructions from the Pope, and a synod was held by Cardinal Pole, but not a word was dropped by any ecclesiastical power,

* It is highly necessary that these and other writers of their class should learn the necessary distinction between the *unchangeable decisions of councils on faith and morals*, and the *changeable ordinances regarding discipline.*

† See *Van Espen Jus. Ecc.* vol. ii.

calling for or recommending persecution. Two years of her reign passed without any measure of this nature, and it was only after a second insurrection on the score of religion, within that space of time, that she unfortunately resolved to employ the impolitic as well as the cruel expedient of persecution, to secure her tranquillity. But why need I resort to history in order to convince Sir R. M., Dr. D., &c. that Catholics are not bound by their tenets to extirpate those of a different communion, when they have it in their power so to do? Have these Gentlemen never travelled in Catholic countries? Have they never been at Rome? If they have not, I am acquainted with some relatives of the former who have been there, and who were most kindly received by the Pope, though they neither concealed their religion nor their connections; and if these very Gentlemen should choose to set out thither to-morrow, displaying the lying *History of all the Rebellions in Ireland*, with the rest of their works, both avowed and anonymous, I will be answerable with my life, that their lives will be in as much safety there, as were those of certain Quakers, who heretofore went to Rome to convert the Pope, and who having opened their mission in St. Peter's Church by exclaiming to him: *Thou Scarlet Whore, &c.* the Pontiff quietly dismissed them to return to England, with money to conduct them thither. If the Gentlemen are still haunted with fears of being burnt by Catholics in conse-

quence of the persecuting doctrine or practices of former times, let them point out to me a Protestant country in which the same doctrine has not been taught, and the same practices has not prevailed; let them mention a sect, which *being in power*, has not persecuted fellow Protestants as well as Catholics. It suffices here to say, that Beza has written a large work on this subject, * in which he cites Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Bucer, and every other eminent Protestant divine of that age in defence of the persecuting system. The sanguinary opinions and practices of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Edwin, King, &c. are well known. It has been demonstrated † that many more Catholics were put to death under Elizabeth and the first Stuarts, for the mere exercise of their religion (not to speak of a crowd of Anabaptist and Arian victims) than all the Protestant sufferers in Mary's reign.

X. It is objected, that whatever Papists may be in themselves, they acknowledge a foreign jurisdiction, namely that of the Pope, which is establishing an *Imperium in Imperio*, and that "the "Oath of Supremacy does not impose a restric- "tion on any persons but rebels and traitors ‡."

It is true, that their Church being widely extended amongst nations and people of different

* *De Hæreticis capitaliter puniendis à Civili Magistratu.*

† See *Letters to a Prebend. on Persecution.*

‡ *Considerations*, p. 47.

politics, habits, and languages, it is necessary they should have a centre of union, which they believe to be in the See of Rome, and that its Bishop possesses a certain spiritual jurisdiction in the mere concerns of religion. But unless this can be proved to be *in the same kind and of the same nature* with the civil and temporal supremacy of his Majesty, it no more establishes an *Imperium in Imperio*, or derogates from his rights and dignity, than if the musicians or painters of this country were to appoint some celebrated Roman artist to be their president, and were to consult him about the rules of harmony, or the merit of pictures. Now that there is no interference between the spiritual, and the civil and temporal jurisdiction in the opinion of Catholics, is proved by the very clear and explicit terms of their oath, contained in their petition, according to which they have sworn that they "Do not "believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other "foreign prince, prelate, state, or potentate, "hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil "jurisdiction, power, superiority, or pre-emi-"nence within this realm." If any Englishman giving credit to the sincerity of his Catholic brethren in taking this oath, (a sinceriry which, as the Petition states, and I have shewn, is so invincibly proved by their conduct) if any Englishman, I say, is still jealous of their allegiance, by reason of their acknowledging the aforesaid spiritual jurisdiction, he is evidently more jealous than the despotic sovereigns of

Prussia and Russia are, who even keep agents at Rome. They are more jealous than the cautious Pontius Pilate was, who being alarmed at our Saviour claiming to be a king, was satisfied when Christ assured him that, his *kingdom was not of this world* *, and immediately went out of his judgment hall to say to the assembled Jews, *I find in him no fault at all* †.

I am almost ashamed to take notice of the indecent and seditious language of these libellers of their brethren and fellow subjects cited above. If the Oath of Supremacy *imposes a restriction upon none but rebels and traitors*, then is the noble Lord, so often alluded to, who fought at the hill of Tarah, a rebel and a traitor; then has his Majesty five or six millions of avowed rebels and traitors amongst his subjects at the present time; then all our Catholic ancestors were, as all the subjects of Spain, and the other Catholic powers are still, virtually rebels and traitors, in consequence of their objection to the substance of this oath. I must add, that all the Dissenters of every persuasion were rebels and traitors down to the reign of William and Mary, when all the affirmative part of the Oath of Supremacy was cut down‡ in compliance with their scruples. In consequence of this change a subject may now publicly acknowledge the religious supremacy of the Patriarch of

* John xviii. 36. † Ibid. ver. 38.

‡ See 1 W. and M. sess. 1. cap. 3. compared with 1 Eliz. cap. 1.

Muscovy, or of the Mufti of Constantinople, or of the Lama of Thibet, or of the General Assembly of Scotland, without any inconveniency whatever from the laws. Happily however the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland have decided, in opposition to these fanatics, that those who abjure the Pope's civil and temporal jurisdiction in the terms of the oath "deserve to be considered as *good and loyal subjects* *."

XI. But it is urged, the Papal Supremacy is not merely spiritual and religious, as is pretended; on the contrary, it claims the supreme direction of all human affairs here upon earth, particularly the right of dethroning sovereigns and disposing of kingdoms and empires. Amongst innumerable other instances, "Pope Pius V. in "his Bull fulminated against Queen Elizabeth, "declared her subjects absolved from their oaths "of allegiance, and called upon them to rise in "arms and to depose and murder her. It is "well known that many persons by attempting "to conform to it, were hanged or transported †."

The question is not, what power has been claimed by Popes heretofore, when they were considered, by an almost general consent, as the umpires of Christian Princes, but what power is ascribed to them by English and Irish Catholics at the present day. Now these, by their solemn

* 22 Geo. III. c. 24. Irish. † *Observ. on Corresp.* p. 17.

oath, inserted in the Petition, do "renounce, reject "and abjure the opinion, that Princes excommu-"nicated by the Pope and Council, or by any "authority whatsoever, may be deposed or mur-"dered by their subjects, or by any person what-"soever." It is true, a Bull of excommunication and deposition was published by the aforesaid Pope against Elizabeth, though not of the tenor these writers assert it to have been *. But how, I ask, was the Bull received by English Catholics, even in the times we are speaking of? It was utterly disregarded by them. They continued to pray and to fight for their unnatural stepmother, with the same zeal and fidelity as if she had been their natural and affectionate mother. One Catholic alone of all the clergy and laity, John Felton, Esq. (I defy the writers to name a second, who was hanged or transported on this account,) attempted to conform to the Bull, and his conduct was universally reprobated by those of his communion. If they still reproach Catholics with the conduct of Popes in past ages, I will undertake to shew that a greater number of Princes were deprived of their dominions, in whole or in part, within a century and a half after the first preaching of Luther, by the liberty introduced of each man's interpreting the scripture for himself, or of following the movements of the supposed spirit within him, than

* There is not a word in the bull about the subjects rising in arms and murdering Elizabeth. See the orginal Latin in *Camdeni Annales*, &c.

were deposed by Popes during the whole time they claimed a power of doing this *.

XII. All this, however, says another writer, will not do, because the present Pope, even Pius VII. has "done a deed without a name. He "has been guilty of impiety and blasphemy— "by conferring a crown upon an usurper, and— "anointing him with the holy oil of kings†."

My answer is, that this is one of those civil and temporal transactions in which British Catholics have renounced and abjured all connection with the See of Rome. Neither they, in general, nor

* One of the writers threatens the Catholics with fresh oaths and engagements, to prevent the consequences which he and others deduce from their principles and history. In this case, it will be fair for Catholics to call for a corresponding code of new tests, to restrain persons of almost every other communion. It may be required of Presbyterians and Independents to swear that, notwithstanding the clearness of scripture for *Israel repairing to his tents*, they never will take arms against the King and constitution, by way of defending them. The Anabaptists may be called upon to swear, that, notwithstanding *all things belong to the just*, and though *God heretofore gave to John of Leyden* and others *whole cities at a time*, they will, notwithstanding any such divine present, leave his Majesty in possession of his crown, and every sinner of his estate and fortune. The Anomeans ought to swear, that, though *there is no law for the faithful*, yet that they will observe the laws of the land. And even the Quakers may be desired to affirm, that *however the spirit of the Lord may move them*, as it did their founder George Fox, they will not *enter into the steeple-houses* and call the *impostors* to come down from their pulpits, or go *naked about the streets*, &c. I really believe that all these descriptions are, at present, very good subjects, and that such tests would be vexatious and impolitic. I barely put these cases, by way of quashing the mode of reasoning adopted against the Catholics.

† *Letter to Dr. Troy on the Coronation of Bonaparte, by Melancthon.*

that exemplary and loyal Prelate * in particular, who has met with such unbounded abuse on the occasion, and into whose mouth so many ridiculous arguments are put, for the sake of refuting them †, has said a word in defence of the transaction, or is more accountable for it than any other subject whatsoever. The Catholics look up to the executive power of the state for the rule of their conduct and relations with foreign powers, and they neither do acknowledge nor ever will acknowledge any civil power, authority, style or title, except such as they shall be authorized to acknowledge by his Majesty ‡.

XIII. There yet remains another chapter of objections. It is said that whatever may be the case with the Papists and the Pope, Protestants

* Dr. Troy. † See *A Letter to Dr. Troy.*

‡ Though I am neither obliged nor disposed to enter upon a regular vindication of the Pope's conduct, yet I think common sense and common justice require me to suggest the following hints to Melancthon, by way of moderating that unbounded indignation with which he is transported on the occasion. The See of Rome was faithful to the grand confederacy against France, as long as it was in the power of Austria and the allies to protect it; but when this became impracticable, what was expected from it, according to the law of nations, but to submit to its fate, and own the right of conquest? If the Pope abandoned the Bourbons, and acknowledged Bonaparte as the first magistrate, so did every other government in Europe, and our own among the rest, when it entered into a treaty of peace with him, and prosecuted poor Peltier for abusing him.—The Pope did not raise B——— to the rank of emperor: the latter caused himself to be declared such by his subjects, and to be acknowledged such by most of the powers of Europe, and amongst the rest by Austria, whose rights were most invaded. The Pope did not pretend to confer nor B——— to hold the imperial crown by the ceremony of coronation;

must look to the security of their own Church and their political ascendancy; both which are incompatible with Catholic Emancipation *.

Narrow-minded jealousy and bigotry are sure to stand in their own light. If Catholic Emancipation be necssary, or, at least, advantageous

as a mark of which, the latter is said to have put the crown on his own head.—There was not, as Melancthon supposes, any sacrament or other rite performed, which required innocence or purity of conscience, but the whole ceremonial may be reduced to benedictions and prayers, such as we may bestow on any sinner whomsoever. If Melancthon cannot reconcile himself to this, I would ask him, what were those thousands of French priests, whom this nation, to its immortal honour, so long supported, sent back to do in France, except to pray for its ruling power, and to sing *Domine salvum fac consulem?* One word more: had the Pope refused to acknowledge or sanction the authority of B——— on the ground of his being a wicked man, or an apostate, what would this have been but to assume to himself the very claim here complained of, namely, that of giving and taking away temporal crowns on pretexts of religion?——I shall now say a word of the effects of this business in our own regard. Of all the mischiefs of the French revolution, the subversion of Christianity and morality was viewed by reflecting men as the worst. They were startled at the idea of a moral Algiers being fixed for ever on the opposite shore, and they acknowledged, that their only hopes of the general relations of peace and war being ever observed there, were founded on the restoration of the Catholic Religion. This has accordingly been effected by the *Concordatum* of Pius VII. which, contrary to what is generally supposed, has even secured the spiritual independency that was so long the subject of contention. The state of religion and morality in France is certainly very different from what we could wish it to be; but that person must be blindly ignorant or prejudiced, who will not admit that it is infinitely better than it was ten years ago, and that there are now hopes, through the labours of our late guests the edifying French priests, who are now at liberty to preach, of their countrymen putting off that ferocious and unprincipled character, which rendered them equally dangerous neighbours in peace and in war.—N. B. It ought not to be forgotten that the Pope refused to crown Josephina as the royal consort 'till he had married her to B———.

* *Emancip.* p. 45, &c.

for the security of the state, as all able politicians, even amongst those who oppose it, have unequivocally proclaimed, it must obviously be necessary or advantageous, in the same degree, for the security of the Church. As to protestant ascendancy, it is ridiculous to pretend that this will be overturned by the permission of a mere handful of Irish and English Catholics of rank and fortune to take their chance of getting into Parliament or office, whilst the Sovereign is, and by the Bill of Rights must be, a Protestant of the established Church. But why resort to this argument now, since it was absolutely yielded at the late Union, when even those who were most jealous of this ascendancy, confessed with Dr. Duigenan, that, in the event of such a measure, it was perfectly compatible with Catholic Emancipation *.

XIV. There is an inconsistency, it is maintained, in having a Protestant Sovereign and a Catholic Legislature.

The contrary was demonstrated in the most flourishing periods of Protestantism. During the whole reigns of Edward VI., Elizabeth, James I., Charles I. and down to almost the end of that of Charles II., both Houses of Parliament were open to Catholics in common with other subjects, and they were frequently put into offices of trust and dignity. At length, in a mo-

* See above, p. 4.

ment not of cool judgment, but of phrensy *, (when the infamous Oates and his associates, by dint of swearing, had worked it up into a belief, that the Catholics were engaged in a plot to shoot, stab and poison their best friend, the aforesaid Charles, and to invade the kingdom with an army of 30,000 pilgrims from St. Jago in Spain, whilst a hecatomb of catholic victims was offered up at Tyburn,) the Act entitled : *For the more effectual preserving the King's Person and Government* passed, by which the new qualification for holding any office, sitting in Parliament, sueing in any court, remaining in the King's presence, &c. was established, namely, that the party should swear that *the invocation of the Virgin Mary and the Mass, as used in the Church of Rome, is idolatrous* †! I could wish to ask the persons who have found out an inconsistency that never struck their ancestors, what greater opposition there is between Catholic Legislators and a Protestant King, than between Jewish, Deistical, or Atheistical Legislators and a Christian King. I am far from meaning to insinuate that there are such persons now in Parliament, but the doors of it are evidently open to all such, as the law stands, provided they will swear that the Mass is *idolatry* ‡.

* See *Hume, Dalrymple, North's Examen, &c.*

† 30 Car. II. c. 1.

‡ It does not appear that the Prelates and other chief divines of the Church of England were consulted in framing this passage of the oath;

XV. But: "The present question," says another writer, respectable for his moderation and services to his country, "cannot be debated on "the various topics of general policy and national "utility*, but merely with respect to the terms "of the Coronation Oath." To every argument of that nature in favour of the emancipation which the best and wisest Minister may suggest to the Sovereign, the latter is bound to answer: "I cannot consent to a measure contrary to my "engagement: whatever comes of it I must leave "the consequence to God †."

Having answered this and the other arguments of the writer in question at full length ‡, I shall content myself here with observing, 1st, That neither the terms nor the meaning of his Majesty's oath implies any such engagement as is here expressed. The King engages, indeed, "to pro-"tect the Protestant Religion as established by "law;" but will any man seriously contend, that

which is certainly in opposition to the opinion of the most eminent amongst them, namely, of all those who admitted the possibility of salvation in the Church of Rome. Thus much is certain, that Bishop Gunning, one of the most learned and exemplary Prelates on the bench, warmly opposed the passage about idolatry, and declared that he could not swear to it. See *Burnet's History of his own Times*, vol. i. p. 436.

* *Considerations on the Coronation Oath*, by John Reeves, Esq. p. 6. 1 Ed.

† Ibid. p. 25.

‡ See *The Case of Conscience solved;* or, Catholic Emancipation *proved to be compatible with the Coronation Oath.* Faulder, Wright, Debrett, Stockdale, Keating and Co. &c.

by this oath he is more firmly bound to protect it against Catholics than against Presbyterians, Deists and Atheists? Certainly not; unless he is ready, at the same time, to maintain that there is a greater opposition between the Church of Rome and the Church of England, than between Atheism and the Church of England. Now, if it be admitted that his Majesty can protect the Church against Atheism, without Members of Parliament, &c. being obliged to swear that they believe in the existence of God, why cannot he protect it against Popery, without the same persons being obliged to swear that the Catholic service is idolatry?—2dly, "Whilst yet the coro-"nation oath," as finally settled by the legislature, "was fresh in the mouth of King William," as an illustrious writer observes*, this prince concurred with the other branches of the legislature in altering the tests and repealing the penalties against Dissenters †, without either the consciousness or the reproach of his thereby violating his oath to protect the established Church; though the Dissenters had, but about forty years before that time, actually overturned the said Church.—But this is not all: for, 3dly, The Sovereign was some time afterwards authorized by law ‡, as is still the practice, to swear to the protection of a different church within the pre-

* *Burke's Letter to Sir H. Langrish.*

† 1 W. and M. 1. cap. 18. 1 W. and M. 1. cap. 3.

‡ 5 Ann, cap. 18.

cincts of the same island, namely the Kirk of Scotland. Can I avoid expressing my astonishment at the inconsistency of these reasoners. They can absolve King William and Queen Ann from any violation of the Coronation Oath, in absolutely establishing Presbyterianism on the ruins and fragments of their altars, communion rails, organs, surplices, croziers and mitres *, yet they pretend that his present Majesty is precluded by the very same oath from granting the civil rights of subjets to the Catholics of Ireland and England.—4thly, If there were any force in the present objection, it would equally militate against a score of other legislative or royal Acts to which his Majesty's sanction is actually affixed, namely all the different Acts of Parliament that have been passed, either in Ireland or England, during the present reign, for the partial relief of Catholics, and more particularly the Quebec Act and the Corsican Constitution †.—5thly, Whereas a particular stress is laid on the 30th of Charles II. as a *fundamental law*, which, it is pretended, his Majesty cannot possibly consent to abrogate. I answer, that he has already consented to the abrogation of the most essential part of that Act,

* Every one knows that at this period episcopacy, which had been so zealously supported in Scotland by the Stuarts, was abolished by King William. He was obliged to take an oath to protect the Kirk and to persecute heretics. But the present oath was not settled in parliament till the following reign.

† See the Corsican Constitution, ratified by the Viceroy in the name of his Majesty, June 14, 1794. Art. I.

according to the spirit of it, as signified in the title, namely the exclusion of Catholics from the Royal Presence*. Lastly, It is inconcontrovertible that both the Parliaments of England and Ireland, with his Majesty at their head, have *recognized the principle* of the particular privilege which is most disputed, namely, in the Articles of the late Union, where they decree that the members of the United Parliament shall take and subscribe the usual oaths and declarations "UNTIL THE SAID PARLIAMENT SHALL "OTHERWISE PROVIDE†."

XVI. By way of conclusion, it is foretold by the former writers, whose unrivalled zeal for the protestant interest is so much extolled in many of the Reviews‡, that "Catholic Emancipation "would jacobinize Ireland, and terminate in "anarchy and turbulence§."

I answer, that other persons, full as clear-sighted, and who have proved themselves to be

* 31 Geo. III. c 32.

† Art. IV.

‡ It is well known in the literary world, that there are ways and means by which an author may be enabled to publish strictures on his own work in the public reviews, and this is actually supposed to be the case with the accounts published in them of some of the late pamphlets alluded to. Be this as it may: there have been other persons possessed of as ardent a zeal for Protestantism as any of the writers in question, or their associates: for example, the late Lord G. Gordon, who himself was a convert from Popery, but who not succeeding in his attempts against it ended his life in Newgate a professed Jew, with a long rabbinical beard and a Hebrew mistress.

§ *Considerations*, p. 39.

as good and as disinterested friends to their country, draw just the opposite conclusions from this hypothesis. If ever there was a man whose native powers of mind and long experience had enabled him "*to attain . . . to something like prophetic strain**" it was the late Edmund Burke. This illustrious patriot and statesman, speaking of the establishment of the catholic religion in Canada, and ridiculing the predictions of certain other short-sighted and narrow-minded prophets, expresses himself thus: "It is true that some "people, and amongst them one eminent divine, "predicted at that time, that by this step we "should lose our dominions in America. He "foretold that the Pope would send his indul-"gences thither; and that the Canadians would "fall in with France, declare their indepen-"dence, and draw or force our colonies into the "same design. The independence happened, "according to his prediction; but in directly "the reverse order. All our protestant colonies "revolted. They joined themselves to France; "and it so happened that popish Canada was "the only place which preserved its fidelity; "the only place in which France got no footing; "the only peopled colony which now remains to "Great Britain †."

* *Il Penseroso.*

† *Letter to Sir H. Langrish,* p. 84.

POSTSCRIPT.

Amongst the opponents of the measure in contemplation, I understand there are two descriptions of persons. One of these (small and insignificant I suppose it to be) is so far transported with bitter zeal against Catholics, that, regardless either of private or public benefit, its partizans scruple not to declare they would rather concur to the renewal of the whole sanguinary code of Queen Elizabeth, for the extirpation of Papists, than to the adoption of any law or regulation which might prove an indulgence to them. The other class object only to what they improperly call Catholic Domination, and declare it to be just and politic to remove any real or specific grievances under which they labour*. To such respectable personages I could wish to propose the two following grievances, as equally affecting the welfare of the Community and the consciences of Catholics.

The very idea of exacting religious qualifications to fight the battles of the country in such times as these must appear strange and unaccountable to the nations of Europe. Yet so the law stands. Not only Gentlemen are precluded from holding military commissions in England, without abjuring transubstantiation; but also a

* In this number is Mr. Reeves. See his *Consid. on Coron. Oath.*

common man is not permitted by law to shoulder a musket in the militia, unless he can swear that he *is a Protestant.* This, however, is not the subject of the present complaint, but the following. In Ireland, which is the grand resource for recruiting our regular regiments, as well as our navy, the laws against the service of Catholics, with the exception of the higher posts, have been repealed these twelve years. In consequence of this, thousands, and indeed hundreds of thousands of Irish Catholics have been enlisted there under the idea, and under the positive assurances of those, whom they considered as the representatives of government, that they *were to be left at full liberty to practice their own religion,* and that *no conformity with any other would be required of them.* But no sooner are these poor men shipped off to England or some of its dependancies, according to the general practice of the war-office (and frequently, as I am told, even before they leave Ireland) than they find themselves precluded from the exercise of their own worship, and forced, under pain of the severest punishment, to attend another, in opposition to their conscientious feelings. I grant that the practice of commanding officers is not uniform in this particular; a circumstance which rather augments than lessens the evil. I remember an instance of a regiment, consisting chiefly of catholic soldiers, being permitted and required here in England to attend their chapel,

until they received their new clothes and arms. This being done, they were assembled on parade, and a letter was read to them purporting that they were ordered by the Commander in Chief henceforward to attend the service of the Church: just as if grown men could, at once, divest themselves of their earliest and dearest sentiments, and change their religion as easily as they change their clothes! I say nothing of the hardship and *religious intolerance* of this proceeding, and of the deception that is practiced on those who venture their lives for their country; which deception they fail not, in their minds, to attribute to government itself; I chiefly wish to call your attention, and that of other moderate men, to the *impolicy* of it. Must it not impede the recruiting service in Ireland? Must it not leave a degree of discontent and disaffection amongst the soldiers who are actually serving? Can any thing more contribute to make Irishmen feel that they are fighting their own battles, than to make them feel that they are fighting for the practice of their religion?

The second grievance equally affects the public welfare, because it affects the public morals. It is generally known that matrimony, according to the catholic faith, is not only a solemn contract, *indissoluble*, even in cases of infidelity, but also a *sacrament*, which is therefore celebrated amongst them with the same kind of religious preparation as the sacrament of the Lord's Sup-

per itself is. Hence they must necessarily have recourse to their own clergy for the performance of this sacrament. In Ireland the marriages performed by catholic priests, after the publication of banns, &c. are good in law; but our English *Marriage Act* having been passed before the relaxation of the penal laws, at a time when the existence of a catholic priest could not be recognized, Catholics were, on that account, and *that only*, (as Ministry then declared, and as the spirit of the Act, which is purely civil, proves) excluded from the exception it contains in behalf of Jews and Quakers. Hence their marriages must necessarily be clandestine, and hence those very evils which the Marriage Act was calculated to prevent, cannot but frequently take place amongst them. The poor Irish knowing that the catholic rite is sufficient for every purpose in their own country, and being actually taught that it is a valid and sacred contract, frequently do not take any measures to legalize it. The consequence is, that when they become tired of each other, they too frequenly enter into fresh engagements. On the other hand, minors of a higher rank are encouraged to elope from their parents, in hopes of saving both their honour and their conscience, by getting married by a catholic priest. I know an instance of a protestant gentleman saying to a catholic lady, *I will marry you either at the chapel or the church, as you choose, but I will not marry you twice;* when the

lady, agreeably to her conscience, preferring to be married by a catholic clergyman, (though in a public ambassador's chapel in London) the gentleman, after a five years cohabitation, and the birth of a child, was induced to abandon her to scorn and perpetual celibacy, at the prospect of marrying another lady of considerable rank and connexions. The remedy of these public as well as private evils is obvious and easy. The catholic clergy wish to be put under the regulations of the Marriage Act, a measure that seems naturally to flow from their being now publicly licenced. They wish to enter fully into the spirit of it; as in fact it was modelled after the discipline of their own Council of Trent. They are satisfied that the banns should be published in the parish churches, as well as in their own chapels; or that licences should be obtained, in the usual way, and that all fees should be paid, as at present. The whole that is desired is, that when these and such other conditions as may be judged requisite, shall have been complied with, contracts so solemn and sacred as catholic marriages may not be rendered void by the law, but that a due certificate of a marriage having been so performed may be received into a court of justice, in the same manner as certificates of catholic baptism actually are.

N. B. Just as the press was closing, a new Pamphlet appeared, in support of those which

are animadverted upon above, entitled, *Observations on the Petition of the R. Catholics of Ireland.* It contains very little argument which is not fully answered in these pages, and, though it be written with greater moderation, both as to the principles and persons of Catholics than the former, yet it breathes the same absurd jealousy of their subverting the civil and religious constitution should the Petition be granted. The author, however, does not pretend to shew by what means this could be effected, if the Catholics were desirous of attempting it; nor does he offer a reply to any of those invincible arguments by which the greatest statesmen of the age prove that the measure proposed is necessary for the security of this constitution. In one point the writer is more unjust and extravagant than his predecessors, namely, in imputing to Catholics a creed of his own invention, together with all the absurd and blasphemous assertions of Tetzel, an obscure friar of the 16th century, which they equally detest and condemn now, as they did at the time when they were first broached.—*See Letters to a Prebendary,* p. 166, 2d. Edit.

FINIS.

Erratum, *page* 14, *lines* 20, 21, *for* can neither *read* cannot.

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